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formed. The situation of the city of Edinburgh, scattered, as it were, through a group of eminences, is truly romantic. Like Stirling, the old town of Edinburgh is built on a rising ground, which terminates in a rocky precipice, on which stands the castle. The city, however, has extended itself, during the last century, to the neighbouring eminences, Calton-hill, Arthur's-seat, and Salisbury-craigs. While, at the same time, the new town has spread itself over the level ground which lies to the north of the castle. The regularity, beauty, and cleanliness of this part of the city, forms a striking contrast with the dirtiness and irregularity of most parts of the old town. The Royal Palace of Holyrood lies in a straight line down High-street, and at the lower end of Cannongate-street. Like the palace of Linlithgow, Holyrood-house is a complete square of buildings, erected at different periods, as the style of architecture discovers. The front of the building is beautifully ornamented with large pillars, supporting an arch, which is overtopped with a beautiful imperial crown. Of the inside of the buildings, the apartments formerly occupied by Queen Mary, are the most interesting. The furniture of the rooms, the tapestry hanging in rags, the crimson bed in which the Queen lay, and the chairs of state which are still preserved, make a strong impression upon the mind, of the manners of a distant age. The private stair-case by which Lord Darnley and his accomplices ascended into the bed-chamber of the Queen, for the purpose of assassinating her favourite Rizzio, and the stains which it is pretended his blood has left on the floor,* are pointed out by the intel-

ligent old lady who conducts strangers through the apartments. One of Lord Darnley's boots, his gloves, his spear, and part of his coat of armour, are presented to the observation of the curious. While contemplating the antiquated appearance of these apartments, the mind is involuntarily conducted to that period when they were inhabited by the beautiful Queen; and to review those melancholy transactions which rendered her government as unpropitious to her own welfare and happiness, as they were to that of the people whom she attempted to govern.

To the Proprietors of the Belfast Magazine.

HAVING lately seen in your Magazine several dissertations upon Music, it might be deemed impertinent to arrest public attention again, with a subject which had received such abundant discussion. Instead, therefore, of adding any thing to what has already been advanced, I rather propose offering a few remarks in defence of your correspondent Marcellus, who I am inclined to think has suffered rather severely, though unjustly, from the attack of Porcia. He, in confirmation of his arguments upon the subject, cites a passage of Shakespeare; and is attacked by your correspondent Porcia, in a subsequent Magazine, for branding those who may differ from him in opinion, with opprobrious epithets; and in defence of his doctrine,

discover upon the floor the stains here alluded to. In order to silence any doubts which the incredulous might entertain on this subject, the sapient old lady shows them at the back of the large door which opens upon the grand stair-case, at which place, owing to the deficiency of light, it is impossible to ascertain whether the floor be white or black.

* Notwithstanding the utmost exertion of my optical abilities, I was not able to

8 *Professor Porson not the author of "Devil's Thoughts."* [Jan.

for citing Shakespeare. I coincide most decidedly with your correspondent Marcellus; not that the authority of Shakespeare has any undue weight or influence with me; but merely from being fully convinced of the truth of his observations, and never having any experience to the contrary. I even doubt the possibility of having such experience, for I have never known or heard of any one who was not in some degree pleased with music, (except in the case of Porcia's friend) much less any who dissapproved of it. I rather imagine it impossible to produce a single instance wherein music had lost all its effect, having neither charms to please, nor power to move. From Porcia's reasoning upon this subject, one would be inclined to suppose man to be a creature whose nature is so absolutely perfect as not to stand in need of, or be benefited by relaxation or amusement. It is a notorious fact, that in his present state, man cannot long exist without relaxation and repose; and consequently he is not capable of vigorous, uninterrupted, and continued exertion. As Æsop very justly observes, that a bow, by being always bent, is in a great measure rendered useless, so the mind, by being continually engaged, is by that means more enfeebled and enervated than by enjoying seasonable relaxation and refreshment. There is nothing better calculated to unbend and relax the mind than music; it ought therefore in a moderate degree, to be indulged in by all who have any regard to their health. There is nothing more hurtful or dangerous to health than close application, when continued for a length of time. Porcia says music is too trifling and unimportant to spend any time with; but I would ask, can time be better employed than in the prolongation of life? Close and intense application

to study has hurried many to an untimely grave; whereas, perhaps, if they had indulged a little more in so pleasant and innocent an amusement, it might have tended to lengthen their days. Porcia appears to think it criminal to indulge in a taste for music, or to practise it at all; but I will only ask her how many ways time might be worse spent than in indulging a taste for the finest of the liberal arts? But perhaps her reasoning proceeds from its abuse; in this I agree with her; for the use of any thing is perverted by its abuse. A moderate indulgence in music is certainly innocent and unblameable, but on the contrary, to allow it to engross more of our time and attention than what is either necessary or consistent, is very reprehensible.

METELLUS.

To the Proprietors of the Belfast Magazine.

County Down, Ireland,
Dec. 1813.

GENTLEMEN,

HAVING observed in your last number of the Belfast Monthly Magazine, a misstatement respecting a little poem called "The Devil's thoughts," I beg leave to correct the same. The late Professor Porson was not the author of it. The author is now living in England, and is a man of considerable celebrity in literature. It would be improper, without his permission, to divulge his name on the present occasion, especially as the *jeu d'esprit* in question, was written in his very youth, and by way of a mere college badinage. This, be assured, is the fact; and though I wish not to make public my name, the gentleman who delivers this letter, will privately satisfy you as to the authority upon which I speak. The gentlemen who communicated the poem to your